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We Do Not Throw Rocks At The Teacher! by Katherine C. La Mancusa, International Textbook Company, Scranton, Penn., 1966.

We Do Not Throw Rocks At The Teacher! aims to help inexperienced teachers establish sound practices in the development of classroom control.

The young teacher will soon realize that classroom teaching is different from the idea she had formulated of it during her teacher education. Many questions and problems will arise that were never mentioned in college lectures.

The initial challenge that faces a teacher is for her to accept the worth of individual differences and strive to find a means for welding them into a unified whole. She must work with the class as a whole, but she must respect the individual parts of that whole.

The inexperienced teacher should thoroughly orient herself in all matters of school policy, procedure, and personnel as soon as possible. She needs to realize the importance of these policies and procedures, and even though she might disagree, it would be wise to respect the experience of the administration. If the teacher expects respect for her authority from her students then she must respect the authority of the administration.

Two of the most basic elements in the establishment of classroom control is the ability to plan and to organize. Disorganization and lack of planning will give the teacher a frenzied type of existence at best.

Much can be seen of the interest a teacher has in her students by the type of room environment she provides for them. A pretty room with a variety of interesting displays lets children know that their teacher cares. Teachers have said that an arranged room environment works positively in the maintenance of control. The establishment of monitorships which give children a sense of responsibility and a feeling of pride in their room also helps with classroom control.

A classroom behavior problem is probably best handled by the teacher 1) learning all she can about him; 2) arranging displays and discussions to appeal to his interests; 3) building his ego; 4) giving him responsibility; and 5) showing him that she cares.

It is often a good practice to let the students help formulate the classroom behavior standards and then put these standards on a chart at the front of the room. The teacher should then be consistent in demanding that the standards be obeyed. The children must be made to realize that they must accept the consequences if they exhibit deviant behavior.

At the beginning of the year it is wiser for an

inexperienced teacher to be too strict than for her not to be strict enough. "A tightly held reign can be loosened at a projected date, but a loosely held reign can seldom be tightened."

For a teacher to be successful and satisfied in her profession, she must have a high degree of commitment and a positive attitude. She will receive from teaching only what she puts into it.

Slithery Snakes And Other Aids to Children's Writing by Walter T. Petty and Mary E. Bowen, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1967.

Children do not learn to be effective, creative writers by simply learning to identify parts of speech and by completing punctuation and usage exercises in workbooks. They must be guided and motivated by interested and informed teachers. Slithery Snakes and Other Aids to Children's Writing aims to aid such teachers.

Factors which encourage good oral expression also encourage good written expression. Skills necessary to good sentence construction and to clarity, unity, and effective organization should and must be taught, but this instruction should come when the need arises and should be the means toward effective communication, not an end in itself.

Creative writing benefits a child in that it requires an alert mind, it releases tensions, it builds his vocabulary, it develops self-discipline, and it is fun.

A good creative writing program depends on a good teacher. She must furnish the enthusiasm to get her students enterested in writing. She must make time for the program. She must add to the multitude of ideas that children bring to school with them and provide them with

something to write about. The teacher can encourage children to be observant and to find experiences worthy of expression themselves.

One of the most successful methods of getting children to write is the assignment of a specific topic. A teacher can also have her students write about invented circumstances. Often nonsense titles will spark their imaginations. Young writers can also be stimulated by working from a given beginning. The class as a whole might write the beginning of a story and then each individual could complete it. Children can also write about familiar characters or objects. Any of these methods will be more beneficial if a discussion of ideas, descriptive words, and possible situations precedes the writing activity.

Children should be introduced to a thesaurus early, and should have the importance of using effective synonyms stressed to them. The teacher should make her students aware of the different ways of arranging a sentence and of the different kinds of sentences. Punctuation should be taught with as little rule-recitation as possible. Models can be found to copy when the need arises.

Various writing forms which children are capable of employing include autobiography (this form must be limited), biography, diaries and journals (a good form for relating social studies and writing), letters, scripts, serialized

stories, poetry (cinquain, limerick, haidu, couplet, triplet), tall tales, reviews, advertisements, parodies, and news stories.

Elementary children can absorb much material on the organization of a story. This includes plotting, characterization, mood, setting, tense, and point of view.

Personification, onomatopoeia, alliteration, internal rhyme, metaphor, simile, and analogy are important writing tools that elementary children need to become familiar with.

Even the best planned writing program can hit a slump, but the teacher should not let this discourage her. She should, with the help of her students, try to find and eliminate the problem and then proceed full speed.

The only writing that really should be rewritten is that which is basically good but needs "touching up." Recopying will be less discouraging to a young writer if it is done in the handwriting practice session.

In evaluating children's writing, a teacher must consider the goals she has set, the needs of each child, and what each child has attempted to do. Grades should be given on the basis of what is praiseworthy in the child's work, not as the climax of fault-finding.

Up the Down Staircase by Bel Kaufman, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964.

Up the Down Staircase is a novel about a young, inexperienced English teacher in a large New York City high school. The school is in a depressed area of the city and most of the students are from disadvantaged homes.

The tragedy of ineffective teachers is reflected in this book. One of the teachers is simply teaching school to make a living until he can get one of his books published. He feels that his students' growth and advancement academically and socially are not his concern. Another teacher tries to make a game or a joke out of learning. Her main concern is that her students like her--that she be their "pal." A math teacher in this school has a pure hatred for children. He feels that they should all be kicked out into the world at the age of fifteen and that the girls should be sterilized so that they could not reproduce more like themselves. The Guidance Counselor is much more interested in labeling the students with pseudo-Freudian phrases than in understanding and helping them.

The students reactions to these teachers is quite negative. They resent the indifferent and the antagonistic teachers and do their best to be rebellious and uncooperative with them. Their "pal" teacher and her learning games are

no more than a joke to them. The counselor is resented because she is unwilling and unable to meet their needs.

Many of the students that the young English teacher has have come through at least nine years of public education without learning to construct sentences, to spell, to express themselves, or to punctuate as well as the average fifth grader can. Of course, the students' environment and background have much to do with this; but when a teacher lives up to her responsibilities, these conditions can be overshadowed.

There are several examples in the book of non-achieving students who begin to advance when the young teacher lets them know that she is genuinely interested in them and wants to help them. She had to prove that she likes them as people and that she can be trusted before they would accept her help though.

This teacher is particularly interested in reaching one boy. He has a very high IQ, leadership qualities, and great potential, yet he has never made good grades, has frequently caused trouble, and is thinking of dropping out of school. He is very suspicious of teachers--he feels they are phonies who have no true interest in him. At one time it seems as though the young teacher almost wins his trust, but he runs from her and she never learns what he becomes. Non-fictitious teaching will be similar--there will be those who can be reached, those who cannot be

reached, and those whose outcome will remain a question.

There are many things about the school and the administration that discourage learning. There is so much clerical work that the teachers do not have time to be truly effective. The library is often closed to the students. Discipline and order are stressed to the point that excitement and enthusiasm about learning are stifled. There is an acute shortage of books and materials. The building itself is inadequate and depressing.

In spite of an appealing offer to teach in a nice upper-middle class junior college, the young teacher chooses to remain at the New York City high school. She feels the frustrations, heart-aches, disappointments, and anxieties are forgotten when a student shows a flicker of interest or understanding.

The Saber-Tooth Curriculum by Raymond Wayne, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1939.

The Saber-Tooth Curriculum contains a series of lectures which, in effect, satirize the modern process of education. These lectures were delivered to the author by the imaginary J. Abner Peddiwell, Ph.D., of the imaginary Petaluma State College at a bar in Tijuana.

The beginning of Dr. Peddiwell's lectures concerned the development of education in a prehistoric community. A forward-looking member of the tribe decided that if the play of the children were guided and used to prepare children for adulthood, the whole tribe would benefit. He felt that by training children in the three most important areas of life at that time, woolly horse clubbing, fish grabbing with bare hands, and saber-tooth tiger scaring with fire, that the community as a whole would profit from more hides for clothing and shelter, more fish to eat, and more security from saber-tooth tigers. In this first curriculum the courses were practical and the children liked to learn.

Before long, however, the way of life in the community changed. The little woolly horses and the saber-tooth tigers left the area. The streams became too muddy and the fish became too agile for catching ~~for catching~~g them bare-handed. Yet the school curriculum still contained only these three

activities. At this time even the best educated individuals were unprepared to meet the needs of life. Even when inventive men discovered newer and better ways of doing things, the educators refused to change the curriculum. They soon developed the defense that these outdated courses were of cultural value and taught students "how to think." Because the school was not relative to life, the youth began to lose interest.

As the educational processes "progressed", it became necessary for the teachers to receive training. However, much of this training was pointless and many of the teachers' qualifications existed on paper, not in the classroom. The teachers were trained to make simple subjects complex and interesting subjects dull.

There soon developed in the prehistoric community a method of education which parallels with spoon-feeding students today. This process was as pointless and ineffective as the others.

Later, gimmicks and aids to learning were introduced to make learning fun. The children did have fun, but they profitted little educationally.

In time the first three courses of the prehistoric school came to be regarded as magical, as having all the answers. Other courses were ranked according to their magical value and there was much debate as to what courses should be worth and as to which courses everyone should have

to take. These (as well as other) aspects of higher education were treated as though they were terribly trivial by the author.

A political and economic monopoly soon developed in the community. The ineffective education of the people did little to stop the unemployment and hunger of the people. Before long these people were overrun by the tribe from across the mountain who put little stress on the cultural and methodological aspects of education, but who were concerned with practical education and with the betterment of their people.

Life in Classrooms by Philip W. Jackson, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, 1968.

Life in Classrooms gives insight into how significant the elementary school experience (including the teacher) is to children.

The young child must learn to deal with three new facts of life in elementary school: crowds, praise, and power.

In public schools most things are done with or in the presence of others. Children must learn to be alone in the crowd if they are to be successful students. They must learn to concentrate in spite of interruptions by classmates. It is, in part, the demands of the group that keep the teacher so busy. She must plan class activities for the group, keeping in mind that the speed of the group is the speed of its slowest member. Another bad consequence of the crowd is the fact that lining up and waiting wastes a surprising amount of class time.

Failure and success, praise and criticism first become official in the classroom. The classic form of evaluation is tests. . .The teacher is not the only source of judgement, however. A child's classmates, as well as the child himself, take part in the evaluation. The teacher should keep in mind that a child often must perform in a way that will bring

praise from the teacher but criticism from his peers. The teacher and school authorities should try to reduce the discomfort that is associated with some of the harsher aspects of criticism and evaluation.

The fact of unequal power is a third feature of classroom life which students must become accustomed to. Students sometimes feel forced to employ "shady" practices when dealing with teachers' authority. One type of interpersonal maneuvering is that of seeking special favor. A second tactic is that of simply trying to stay out of trouble.

The crowds, the praise, and the power in the classroom combine to form a hidden curriculum that becomes as important to a child's success in school as the academic curriculum is. In many schools conformity to institutional achievement is as important as intellectual achievement.

Studies of how students feel about school indicate that the majority of students "like" school and a smaller number "dislike" it, but one group does not "love" school and the other "hate" it. In most cases of discontent, children seemed to feel negatively about the institution of school rather than about the people it houses. More girls than boys admit to liking school. In general, there is no relationship between a child's attitude toward school and his academic performance. This could be because a majority of students do not feel strongly one way or the other about school.

Many teacher feel that gaining the attention of their students should be their main objective. However, since a child's attention is so changeable and deceptive, a teacher should strive for involvement instead of attention from her students. A student's motives should be more important than his classroom manners.

The problems of classroom rules of order fall into five major classes. These are 1) who may enter and leave the room; 2) how much noise is tolerable; 3) how to preserve privacy in a crowded setting; 4) what to do when work assignments are prematurely finished; and 5) how far to go in establishing the classroom equivalent of social etiquette. In answering these problems teachers must remember that different classes have different needs.

In interviews with teachers who were considered outstanding by their administrations, immediacy, informality, autonomy, and individuality were the themes mentioned as necessary for the fulfillment of teaching duties. These teachers felt that the results of their teaching were quite visible. They felt that a student's enthusiasm and involvement were more important than his performance on tests. They favored a flexible curriculum and an informal atmosphere. The teachers felt that they should be free of control and interference from their administrations. As a whole, they saw the accomplishment of individuals as foremost in importance.

The sources of satisfaction in the teaching profession are many. Some of those discussed in Life in Classrooms are a sense of personal usefulness, a feeling of accomplishment, the excitement created by the unexpected, the thrill of witnessing dramatic change, and the ability to reach a child whom other teachers have given up on.

Learning theorists and researchers seem to have as their goal the transformation of teaching from an art to a science. However, there is no evidence that such a change is desirable.

Children's Thinking by David H. Russell, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1956.

What is thinking? It is a term that most people are familiar with and make use of frequently; but what sort of process does it define? Perhaps a more important question is: what is children's thinking?

Although a child's thinking may seem quite different in varying situations, the influences on his thinking are probably more or less constant. The environment the child finds himself in, the extent of his confrontation with specific problems, and the maturity and personality of the child influence a child's thinking whether his thoughts involve images, percepts, memories, vocal sounds, feelings, ideas, or judgments.

Four main factors included in a study of thinking processes are: the materials of thinking (sensations, memories, concepts, etc.); the motives in thinking (the feelings, attitudes, and habits which influence thinking); the processes of thinking (from relatively undirected thinking to inductive thinking to problem solving, critical thinking, and discovery); and the abilities in thinking which produce ease and accuracy in problem situations.

One of the most profitable ways of classifying thinking processes is according to the amount of direction involved

in the thinking. The different types of thinking under this classification are perceptual thinking, associative thinking, problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, and inductive-deductive thinking leading to concept formation or conclusion.

The different processes of thinking are similar in the stages which they go through. These stages are as follows: the environment stimulates thinking; the thinking takes its initial direction, there is some search for related materials; these materials are organized into tentative patterns or hypotheses; the hypotheses are examined critically; and some tentative conclusion or goal is reached.

A study of thinking is worthless unless the person doing the thinking is considered. A child's mental ability is undoubtedly influenced by heredity and environment and the influence of environment increases as the child grows older. An increase in age also brings differences in thinking behavior.

A child's thinking is based on his experiences. His interpretations of objects and events in his environment are his percepts. Percepts, along with concepts and sometimes emotions, are the materials of thinking. They are aspects of thinking, not just causes of it. Children perceive what they do because of needs and predispositions. The act of perception seems to involve three stages generally. As a child looks at a picture, his perception may change from

1) a general impression to 2) differentiation of parts to 3) some sort of intergration to the whole again. To develop percepts, the home and school should give the child many opportunities in a free environment to explore, manipulate, and play with toys, tools, and other equipment.

Concepts often develop slowly out of percepts, memories, and images. Concept development as such is not a problem for the normal child, but the type and scope of his concepts might be. In the modern world there is an enormous number of concepts which may be acquired by children. These concepts may be known thoroughly, partially, inaccurately, or not at all by a child. The child's environment and first-hand experiences influence his knowledge of concepts.

Emotions and attitudes are forces originating thought and directing it into certain channels. All attitudes (prejudice, opinion, etc.) include both an emotional core and a knowledge factor. The problem in working with children is not of eliminating emotional and attitudinal behaviors, but of giving them a directive force in thinking processes which will increase the purposefulness and efficiency of thought.

Much of children's thinking is of a reproductive nature. Memory and associations are an important part of children's mental activity. Daydreams and fantasy are less directed and more personal forms of associative thinking. Daydreams and fantasy merge into the imaginative, creative thinking

of childhood. They also give the teacher clues to the child's personality.

Problem solving is the process by which the child goes from the problem as he sees it to a solution which meets the demands of the problem for him. A child must be able to understand a task before it is a problem to him. Also, what is a problem to one child may not be a problem to another. Some factors which affect problem-solving ability are the nature of the problem, the methods of attack on the problem, the characteristics of the solver, and social or group factors in the situation. During the preschool years problem-solving abilities develop rapidly with 1) accumulation of information, 2) increasing ability to see relationships and grasp patterns of ideas, 3) widening purposes, often socially induced, for solving more problems, and 4) the possible acquisition of more modes of attack on problems. Problem-solving ability increases with age in terms of both speed and accuracy. However, children are often impetuous in their problem-solving, rather than following logical steps in their thinking.

Most children do not learn to think critically by themselves; they need help in becoming critical thinkers. Usually a child needs help in adopting a critical attitude toward something which has been a part of his environment. Propaganda is one reason why teaching critical thinking is important. Since children are exposed to propaganda most of their lives, teaching them to recognize and analyze it

critically is essential. Critical thinking cannot be taught successfully as a separate group of tricks or devices. It should be brought into all areas of schoolwork. The school is the agency in a child's life most likely to develop abilities in critical thinking. The teacher must recognize the importance of critical thinking, must allow time for discussion of controversial issues, must see that all sides of a question are presented, and must emphasize the process of obtaining an answer rather than the correctness of the answer itself.

A problem in promoting creative thinking in the classroom is that of encouraging freshness and spontaneity while respecting the demands of the social group. Childhood and creativity go together, even though children differ widely in their creative abilities. Creative production seems to depend on a background of experiences, the development of a desire to express oneself, the availability of a variety of materials, time and a permissive atmosphere for creative work, and a teacher who has had experience in creative activities.

"Democracy has its surest foundation in objective understanding, in problem-solving behavior, and in the habit of basing decision and action on rational considerations. Such understandings and powers develop slowly. They must be a conscious aim of the school and they must be taught, starting with young children."